

The LEARNING CONVERSATION GUIDELINES

The quality of your leadership is revealed one conversation at a time.

Listen for Understanding

Listen empathetically to understand without judgement or blame. | Reflectively listen to your own thoughts as others speak ideas into the group. | Listen from a place of learning rather than a place of knowing. | Listen to understand rather than to fix, argue, counter, agree, or dissuade. | Listen to each other without regard for position or roles in the organization. | Listen to yourself, to what is underneath the words of others, and to the group.

Speak from the Heart

Speak candidly, from your experience, from the moment. | Speak for yourself. | Speak when truly moved rather than to fill silence. | Speak into the circle, into the whole group, rather than individuals. | Speak into the stream of developing common understanding.

Suspend Certainty

Suspend your certainty about an idea or position – especially your own. | Suspend your assumptions, beliefs and developing thinking for the group to see. | Suspend any need to be right or hold the correct answer, position, or solution. | Suspend one's certainties by holding up for examination.

Hold Space for Difference

Embrace differing points of view as opportunities for learning. | Replace the use of the word "but" with the word "and". | Notice others who are silent and providing opportunity for involvement. | Acknowledge the usefulness of other points of view. | Be involved while being detached and open to outcomes that may not be your outcomes. | Avoid being fixated on one outcome or idea.

Slow Down the Conversation

Enable silence as the group members of the circle or group digest the previous speaker's words. | Reflect on how the words of the speaker (s) resonate with you. | Take time for the conversation to develop and deepen. | Embrace silence as a means of deepening common understanding.

